

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Laura Dalma, age 41, of Madison, Wisconsin, pleaded guilty yesterday in U.S. District Court in Madison to wire fraud.

According to an indictment returned by the grand jury on May 11, 2006, Dalma engaged in a scheme to defraud her employer, Medical Education Institute, Inc. (MEI), by issuing forged company checks to herself, which she deposited into her personal bank account at Wells Fargo Bank. Dalma worked in the accounting department at MEI. The scheme lasted from January 2004 to October 2005. Dalma was caught in October 2005 when MEI conducted an audit of their accounting records and discovered the forged checks to Dalma.

As part of the scheme, Dalma also wire-transferred MEI funds from the corporate account at Associated Bank to her account at Wells Fargo. Because the wire transfers traveled through the Wells Fargo Electronic Wire Transfer Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, they were charged as wire fraud counts. Dalma pleaded guilty yesterday to one of the wire fraud counts. Pursuant to federal law, her sentence will be based on her entire pattern of criminal conduct.

U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb scheduled sentencing for October 25, 2006,

at 1:00 p.m. Dalma faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and restitution in excess of \$37,000.

The charges against Dalma were the result of an investigation conducted by Madison Police Department. Prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Peter M. Jarosz.

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